

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

(www.lockerbie-wildlife-trust.co.uk)

Eskrigg Reserve

April 2022 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Eskrigg pond on 13 April.



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during April.

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Brambling, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Grey Wagtail, Greylag Goose, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Lesser Redpoll, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Red Kite, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Swallow, Treecreeper, Woodpigeon, Wood Warbler, Wren.

b. Mammals: Bank Vole, Fox, Hare, Mole, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Woodmouse.

c. Amphibians: Frog, Toad

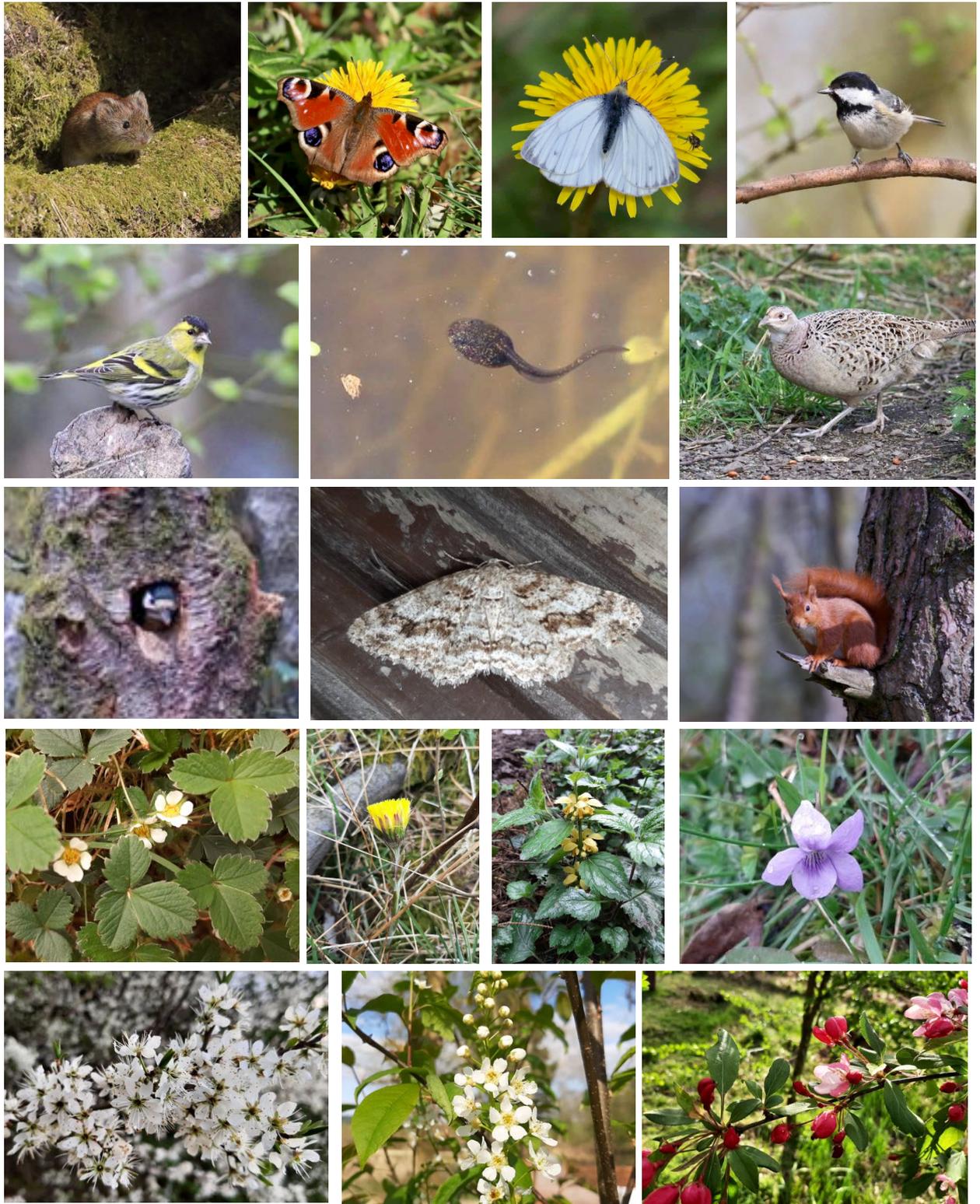
d. Reptiles: Common Lizard

e. Butterflies: Green-veined White, Orange-tip, Peacock



Photographs by Sybille Spägele (SS), Emma Westmancott (EW)

3. April 2022 Photo-gallery.



Row 1(BT): Bank Vole, Peacock Butterfly, Green-veined White Butterfly, Coal Tit

Row 2 (BT): Male Siskin, Tadpole, Female Pheasant

Row 3: Great Spotted Woodpecker (SS), Engrailed Moth (JR), Red Squirrel (SS)

Row 4 (JR): **Barren Strawberry**, Colt's-foot, Variegated Yellow Archangel, Dog Violet

Row 5 (JR): Blackthorn Blossom, Bird Cherry Blossom, Crab Apple Blossom

Photographs by Jim Rae (JR), Sybille Spägele (SS), Brian Taylor (BT)

4. Easter Events:

4/5 Apr. Moth Trapping

Two moth traps were put out overnight and the identification took place the next morning.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Sitka	Pine
Brindled Beauty	<i>Lycia hirtaria</i>	-	2
Clouded Drab	<i>Lomaspilis marminata</i>	8	2
Common Quaker	<i>Orthosia cerasi</i>	1	3
Early Grey	<i>Xylocampa areola</i>	1	1
Engrailed	<i>Ectropis bistortata</i>	-	1
Green Carpet	<i>Colostygia pectinataria</i>	1	-
Hebrew Character	<i>Orthosia gothica</i>	7	4
Micro-moth	<i>Diurnea flagella</i>	-	1
Mottled Grey	<i>Colostygia multistrigaria</i>	2	-
Mottled Pug	<i>Eupithecia exiguata</i>	-	1
Nut-tree Tussock	<i>Colocasia coryli</i>	-	1
Oak Beauty	<i>Biston strataria</i>	-	1
Small Quaker	<i>Orthosia cruda</i>	1	-
Twin-spotted Quaker	<i>Orthosia munda</i>	1	1

7 Apr. Woodland Minibeasts

Four youngsters and their parents booked in for this event. They all enjoyed finding out what woodland creatures had been caught in the pitfall traps and then examining them at the magnification posts. Animals found included:

Cranefly larva	Dipteran Fly
Dipteran larva	Ground Beetle
Ground Beetle larva	Millipede
Spider	Springtail
Tick	Woodlouse



12 Apr. Spring Flower Ramble

Relatively few plants were in flower on this lovely spring morning:

Bilberry, Bog Myrtle, Colt's-foot, Dandelion, Dog Violet, Golden Saxifrage, Gorse, Lesser Celandine and Round-leaved Crowfoot.

14 Apr. Stream Study

Only one family booked in for the stream study. However, they were successful in catching a good variety of organisms, including:

Dipteran larvae (2 species), Stickleback, Leatherjacket (Cranefly larva), Simuliid larvae, Freshwater Shrimps, Flatworms, Caddis larvae (Stone-cased), Mayfly nymphs (3 species: *Ecdyonurus sp*, *Rithrogena sp*, *Baetis sp.*), Tick.



16 Apr. Easter Scavenger Hunt and Quiz

Between 10.00am and 03.00pm, 39 adults, with 32 children and 2 babies, successfully completed the Scavenger Hunt and enjoyed the sunshine and exercise while doing so. All groups earned the cream eggs and sweets they were given at the finish. Participants generously donated a total of £52.59 towards Reserve funds during the event.

Photographs by Jim Rae

5. April Visits

6 Apr. Staff and pupils from **Danderhall Primary School** visited the Reserve and Woodland Walks. After a guided tour of the Reserve itself and a short time observing the woodland birds, they all had their picnic lunch.

The group then went round the walks to the east of the forest road to note the spring flowers that were blossoming at the time and to try and identify the woodland birds from their songs.



6. Maintenance and construction work at the Reserve and Woodland Walks in April.

Maintenance work by youngsters from Lockerbie Academy was not possible during April.

During the period from 1 to 18 April the school was on holiday, and then the Reserve had to be closed to members of the public for the rest of the month, for safety reasons, while forestry operations were carried out in the area adjacent to the Reserve.

1. Preparation for the Easter Activities

Thanks to the **Boyes family** for their help in setting up the Bug Hotel. Thanks to **Norah Muirhead** and **Anabelle Burnett** for their help supervising the **Woodland Minibeasts** event. Thanks to **Anabelle Burnett** and **Sybille Spägele** for helping to supervise the **Stream Study**. Thanks to **David Hughes** and **Sybille Spägele** for helping to supervise the **Scavenger Hunt**.

2. Timber Treatment

The Compost Toilet, Eskrigg Centre, Red Squirrel Hide and Kingfisher Hides were treated with Algon and given a coat of wood preservative. Rubber flooring was also laid in the Kingfisher Hide. Thanks to **Sybille Spägele** for her help on several occasions.

7. Plant of the Month: Bog Myrtle (*Myrica gale*) Flowers: April – May/June

Bog Myrtle is a native, deciduous, aromatic shrub, growing up to 1.5m high. It grows in acid bogs, moors, wet heaths and at the edge of wet woods (carr), all of which have moving groundwater.

Male and female flowers are usually on separate plants (dioecious), but some plants have both male and female flowers (monoecious), and some can change sex from year to year. The male flowers, or catkins, grow on the previous year's shoots and appear before the leaves. They are yellow-orange and up to 3cm long. Each male flower has a red-brown bract and 4 or more cream stamens, which darken later. Female flowers are up to 1cm long and are bright red with red bracts and styles.

The first leaves are green and become greyer as they age. They are elongated ovals up to 6cm long. Twigs are red-brown. The leaves and stems are covered in glands, which give off a highly aromatic balsamic-smelling resin. They contain an essential oil, which has been used as an insect repellent, a scent in candles and a flavouring herb in brewing and cooking.



Male & female flowers

Bog-myrtle grows only in wettish peaty soils typical of upland acidic bogs where nitrogen levels are low; but it has nitrogen-fixing *Frankia*-genus actinobacteria within its root system and is thus able to fix atmospheric nitrogen from the air, which allows it to flourish in this nitrogen-poor environment.

Photographs by Jim Rae

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